Karamu House Presents Regional Premiere of Paradise Blue
Written by Dominique Morisseau and Directed by Justin Emeka

September 26 – October 20, 2019
Karamu House, The Cleveland Foundation Jelliffe Theatre
2355 East 89th Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44106
Media Night is Friday, September 27, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

(Cleveland, Ohio) Karamu House, the oldest multicultural performing art center in country, continues their mission to produce culturally relevant, professional theater with the regional premiere of Paradise Blue, open September 26 through October 20, 2019.

Written by Dominique Morisseau and directed by Justin Emeka, Paradise Blue is dynamic, sultry and spiced with humor. Performances will be held in at Karamu House in The Cleveland Foundation Jelliffe Theatre located at 2355 East 89th Street, Cleveland, Ohio, 44106. The captivating cast includes Dyrell Barnett as Blue, Nina Domingo-Glover as Silver, Andrew Pope as P-Sam , Darryl Tatum as Corn and Latecia Wilson as Pumpkin. Tickets prices range from $20 - $45, group sales and subscription packages for the entire 2019 / 2020 theatre season can be reserved online via www.karamuhouse.org or by calling 216.795.7077.

When Blue needs to just get things out, he picks up his trumpet and lets it sing. His jazz club, Paradise, was once the place in Detroit’s Black bottom neighborhood—until the day Silver, a mysterious woman with a walk that drives men crazy, shows up with her own ideas for Paradise and turns everyone’s world upside down. Dynamic, sultry, and spiced with humor, Paradise Blue is a new American classic you’ll want to experience. This dynamic and musically-infused drama shines light on the challenges of building a better future on the foundation of what our predecessors have left us.

About The Playwright
Dominique Morisseau is the author of The Detroit Project (A 3-Play Cycle) which includes the following plays: Skeleton Crew (Atlantic Theater Company), Paradise Blue (Signature Theatre), and Detroit ’67 (Public Theater, Classical Theatre of Harlem and NBT). Additional plays include: Pipeline (Lincoln Center Theatre), Sunset Baby (LByrinth Theatre); Blood at the Root (National Black Theatre) and Follow Me To Nellie’s (Premiere Stages). She is also the TONY nominated book writer on the new Broadway musical Ain’t Too Proud – The Life and Times of the Temptations (Imperial Theatre).
Dominique is alumna of The Public Theater Emerging Writer’s Group, Women’s Project Lab, and Lark Playwrights Workshop and has developed work at Sundance Lab, Williamstown Theatre Festival and Eugene O’Neil Playwrights Conference. She most recently served as Co-Producer on the Showtime series “Shameless” (3 seasons). Additional awards include: Spirit of Detroit Award, PoNY Fellowship, Sky-Coooper Prize, TEER Trailblazer Award, Steinberg Playwright Award, Audelco Awards, NBFT August Wilson Playwriting Award, Edward M. Kennedy Prize for Drama, OBIE Award (2), Ford Foundation Art of Change Fellowship, Variety’s Women of Impact for 2017-18, and a recent MacArthur Genius Grant Fellow.

About The Director
Justin Emeka is happy to return to Karamu Theatre where he previously directed Detroit ’67and Julius X. Mr. Emeka is a director, writer, actor, and teacher who specializes in contemporary theatre as well as new approaches to "classic” texts. Recently, he adapted and directed Molière’s “Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme” into “The Boougie Gentleman” at New York University Grad Acting Program. Regional theatre directing credits include: Sweat at Pittsburgh Public Theatre and Philadelphia Theatre Company; Sunset Baby at Dobama Theatre; Stick Fly at Intiman Theatre in Seattle; A Raisin in the Sun at the Oberlin Summer Theatre Festival. Off-Broadway directing credits include A Midsummer Night’s Dream and Romeo and Juliet at Classical Theatre of Harlem. At Oberlin College, he directed Death of a Salesman starring Avery Brooks; Dominique Morisseau's Follow Me To Nellie's; Lydia Diamond’s The Bluest Eye; Shakespeare's Macbeth; and Alice Childress's Wedding Band. He published an essay "Seeing Shakespeare through Brown Eyes" in the book "Black Acting Methods: Critical Approaches". Mr. Emeka received his MFA in directing from the University of Washington and is a Drama League Fellow. Currently, he is an Associate Professor of Theatre and Africana Studies at Oberlin College.

Cast:
Dyrell Barnett as Blue
Nina Domingo-Glover as Silver
Andrew Pope as P-Sam
Darryl Tatum as Corn
Latecia Wilson as Pumpkin

Production Team:
Justin Emeka - Director
Tyree Franklin - Stage Manager
Alyssa Jacobs - Assistant Stage Manager
Jaris Owens - Production Assistant
Miyah Byer - Assistant Director
Vonetta Flowers - Director of Production
Inda Blatch-Geib - Costume Designer
Brielle Mcgrew - Costume Coordinator
Richard Morris - Scenic Designer
Prophet Seay - Technical Director
Jaime Benjamin - Lighting Designer
Dred Geib - Prop Master
**About Karamu House:**

In 1915, Oberlin College graduates Russell and Rowena Jelliffe opened the Playhouse Settlement in a Cleveland area called The Roaring Third. The Jelliffes wanted to build an environment where people of different races, religions, and social and economic backgrounds could come together to seek and share common ventures through the arts, and Karamu House was established as a gathering place for racially-diverse members of the surrounding community at that time. As the community became predominantly African American, Karamu responded with programs geared to their needs and interests. Today, Karamu is evolving to be reborn as a beating heart for the entire community, regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identification, or age, as it embarks on its second 100 years, retaining its historical identity as “a place of joyful gathering.” Core programs include a five-performance, socially-relevant and professional quality theatre season; arts education in drama/theatre, music and dance for all ages; and community programming, such as a lecture series, and spoken word and music performances, that invites participation and engagement, reflection, and a re-commitment to cultural values.

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